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CITY OF IMPERIAL BEACH

INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENTAL
STUDIES LIBRARY

GENERAL PLAN

APR 22 1993

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

THE VISION

"MOST SOUTHWESTERLY CITY"

OCTOBER 1992

As the most southwesterly city in the Continental United States, Imperial Beach enjoys a unique location. The City is bordered by significant barriers such as San Diego Bay, the Pacific Ocean, the International Border with Mexico and the Cities of San Diego and Coronado. Within the 4.6 square miles of the city are: Border Field State Park, the Tijuana River National Estuarine Reserve, and Ream Field (a U.S. Navy Outlying Landing Field), 3.5 miles of sandy beach and a 1500-foot public fishing pier.

Imperial Beach retains the atmosphere of a small, beach-oriented town. It is a town on a human scale with a relaxed pace of life. These are vanishing qualities in other California beach communities, which have become overcrowded and exclusive. It is this "quality of life" which the policies of the City will preserve and enhance. The future economic health of Imperial Beach is dependent on fostering development of a broader commercial tax base to support the residents of, and visitors to the City.

As Imperial Beach has a vision of itself, it must also have a vision of how it relates to what surrounds it. The City lies at the center of large metropolitan areas and natural resources. San Diego and Tijuana impose congestion, smog, water pollution, crime and immigration problems on the City. Yet, they also represent a source of income in terms of employment, commerce and tourism. The natural areas around the City such as the Tijuana River Valley, South San Diego Bay, the Otay River Valley and the Sweetwater

Marsh comprise some of the most vital natural resources left in Southern California. The position and uses of these areas has prevented the City from expanding physically or commercially. However, they buffer to a great degree the drawbacks of intense urban development outside the City, provide recreational activities and offer opportunities for generating income through eco-tourism and research.

RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

Future plans should foster keeping neighborhoods stable, well-maintained, and pedestrian oriented. These plans should provide means and incentives to encourage upgrading and rehabilitation of existing housing and, where possible, enhance their public services. Open space and diversity in architectural design will also be encouraged.

Single Family:

The City's R-1 Zoned single-family neighborhoods should be protected from unnecessary traffic, and intrusion of conflicting land uses.

Multiple Family:

In areas zoned for multiple family uses, single family residences will generally continue to be replaced with new apartments and condominiums. An adequate supply of multi-family land uses at various densities will be maintained to provide affordable housing for all segments of the community.

Bayview:

The Bayview area enjoys a special relationship to the tidal salt flats of South San Diego Bay and spectacular views of the Coronado Bay Bridge and downtown San Diego. This area is planned to develop with a mix of duplexes, apartments and condominiums. Adjacent to the bay a public recreation corridor should be maintained to allow the public to enjoy the views.

An urban marine oriented area, with an in-water or dry-land marina, should be planned along the bay front to connect to the City's greenbelt area and the future Otay River Valley Park.

COMMERCIAL

Commercial development should be encouraged to increase the City's tax base, and evaluated in terms of the effect it will have on the economy and quality of living in the City. Particular emphasis should be placed on the development of new businesses and fostering commercial uses providing goods and services to residents and visitors.

Highway 75:

State Highway 75 is a principal entrance into the City. The unusual amount of traffic carried on this highway requires continued effort to coordinate improvement on this route. However, the commercial uses on both sides of Highway 75 are expected to retain a basic automobile orientation. Efforts should be made to expand and enhance additional multi-faceted commercial uses along this route. New development in the corridor will provide increased on-site parking and landscaping, and reduce the number of signs.

Palm Avenue:

The portion of Palm Avenue from where Palm merges with Highway 75 to Third Street will be improved by both public and private

development to become an attractive entrance corridor to the City's beachfront.

The commercial area from Third Street to Seacoast Drive is expected to redevelop over time as the City's beachfront develops with more tourist oriented uses.

Imperial Beach Boulevard:

Development along Imperial Beach Boulevard will be reviewed for ways to revitalize this entrance corridor to the City's beachfront.

The Imperial Beach Boulevard/Thirteenth Street commercial district is expected to continue to provide goods and services for the residents of the City and to expand as demand increases.

Seacoast Drive:

The Seacoast District from Palm Avenue to Imperial Beach Boulevard will continue to emphasize visitor serving uses and become a significant source of revenue to the City. The pier and adjacent pier plaza serve as a major landmark and focal point for visitors. The San Diego Unified Port District is expected to develop commercial uses on or near the pier which will be a benefit to the City.

NAVAL OUTLYING LANDING FIELD (NOLF) IMPERIAL BEACH/REAM FIELD

The City has requested that the Secretary of Defense close NOLF Imperial Beach as part of the 1993 base closure process. It is our vision that upon transfer of the facility to the community, the 551 acres currently part of the Tijuana Slough National Wildlife Refuge remain under control of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and that the Exchange, Commissary, Child Development Center, Job Corps Center, and Immigration and Naturalization Service Center remain in operation at their present locations.

Conceptual reuse planning for the facility will be

undertaken in conjunction with a broad based citizen group, City staff, Southwestern Community College and other agencies. Key concepts for development will be to ensure protection of the environment, and a well balanced utilization plan designed to increase the City's tax base and employment opportunities.

BEACH


Current shoreline access will be preserved and protected and there will be continued expansion of public park areas. The City will work with the Port District to replenish sand on the beach. Additional public parking to service beach recreational areas will be developed.

OPEN SPACE/PARKS

Approximately 50% of the land within the city limits is in permanent public open space consisting of a National Wildlife Refuge with a Visitor Center and a State Park located adjacent to the International Border. The goal of this community should be sustained utilization of this resource and the promotion of Eco-Tourism. Because of a limited amount of park space in the urbanized area of the city, expansion and development of urban parks will be encouraged.

Increased public use of the open space on the Naval Radio Station should be explored with the Navy and City of Coronado. Additional public uses of the Navy Outlying Landing Field (NOLF) should also be considered.

TRANSPORTATION

The City's transportation system will be balanced with the anticipated land use pattern, with ties to the regional arterial and transit systems providing residents and visitors choices of travel modes with an increased emphasis on development of the public transit systems. 

VISION STATEMENT

APPROVED BY

CITY COUNCIL

OCTOBER 7, 1992

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